

## What is the Most Important Thing You Can Do for Kids?

by Mary Beth Blegen, 1996 National Teacher of the Year

**T**alk about education fills the legislatures, the Congress and the offices of governors, superintendents and association leaders all over this country.

Education commands much attention as lawmakers set their minds on budgets, on standards and on student achievement. The arguments about whether to test or not to test, whether to institute vouchers or to not institute vouchers fill important halls every day.

With all of the rhetoric swirls in high places, teachers are facing kids day after day while also thinking about budgets, standards and student achievement. For a teacher, the budget may determine the existence of a job. For a teacher, standards mean trying to decide what is so important for kids to know that it becomes a priority throughout the school and necessitates letting go of other important ideas. For a teacher, student achievement means working day after day with kids to help them understand that without an education, their future is dim. For a teacher, student achievement means seeing kids where they are and helping them become who they can be.

For a parent, what is happening in our schools is crucial to the success of our children. When a parent, a teacher and a kid work together the results are better for everyone. When parents, teachers and school leaders are talking and listening to each other, learning improves for the kids. When schools and parents are at odds with each other because of a lack of communication, a lack of interest or a lack of time, it is the kids who suffer. If parents blame the schools for the problems, it is the kids who suffer. If the schools blame the parents, it is the kids who suffer.

We are adults. It is up to us to shape relationships between parents and schools and kids which improve schools and learning for kids. The responsibility lies with us. What can we as parents and teachers and administrators do to put aside our agendas, our frustrations and our biases in favor of compromise, listening and learning from each other, so that our schools will improve?

I sat by Tim at a conference last year. I asked about school, the prom, classes and work. I asked about Tim. He told me that he was working on a paper about Shakespeare's "King Lear." We talked about the play, about Lear's daughters and about the king himself. We talked about the ideas. Tim told me that he had visited a working artist's studio the night before and sitting in the entry way was a throne-like chair. He said, "I saw Lear sitting there. I could hear him asking his daughters who loved him the most." His eyes lit up while he talked about seeing Lear in that chair. I asked him if that could be his paper... If he could write about hearing and seeing King Lear right there in front of him. "No," he said. "I have to write the paper in the 'right' form. She gave us the structure and told us how to write it." The passion of a young man seeing a character in front of him and the structure of a paper written to fulfill requirements. Tim was caught between structure and passion. I don't know how Tim's paper turned out. I do understand his struggle.

As teachers, we want our students to know passion, to feel what it is like to understand, themselves and others and their world. We are passionate about teaching because we know it is the most important job in the world. We want to be with kids and help them find the balance between structure and passion, in their lives and in their education.

Quality leaders look at their teachers and their students and work to understand just what structure is needed to enhance teaching and learning and what structure inhibits that teaching and learning. Quality leaders look for ways to inspire the passion in teachers which allows them to rise above the growing demands on their time and the growing challenges of kids to continue to know that they do the most important work in the world... with kids. Kids like those who two years ago put a sign on my wall that read, "With kids like us, who wouldn't be a teacher of the year?"

### What's Inside

Extraordinary People	2
Books for Leaders	3
Two Teachers	3
Success is Relative	4
If You Lead from the Heart, Hope will Follow	5
Complement Your Curriculum	6
Alumni News	7
What's Happening	Back Cover

# EXTRAordinary People

by Deb Lecklider, Executive Director, IPLA

**T**hroughout our lives, we come into contact with a multitude of people, and it has been said that we take a little bit of everyone we meet with us. Recently at IPLA's Summer Team Building Institute in Nashville, Indiana, participants, staff and facilitators were fortunate to be exposed to Dr. Tim Lautzenheiser. What we took away from that experience was absolutely positive. "Isn't it amazing how one person can change the course of your life?" This quote from Dr. John F. Demartini came to mind after spending the morning with "Dr. Tim." Throughout the course of the morning he made us laugh, cry and most importantly, proud to be educators. By means of his quirks, animation and story telling, he successfully reached out and touched the lives of 180 people simultaneously. This Hoosier and former music educator holds a passion for teaching that filled the room with a brilliant energy.

When we listen to speakers, we hear many memorable quotes. Dr. Tim had some gems polished for us that morning, and I have included a few of them that will remain in my vocabulary indefinitely.

*"If it comes between being right and being kind... choose kind.  
You can always come back and get it right."*

*"It is impossible to be genuinely kind to another human being  
and not feel better about who you are."*

*"Who you are is so much louder than what you know."*

*"It's not what we think of students that counts,  
it is what they think about themselves."*



**Deb Lecklider, IPLA  
and Dr. Tim Lautzenheiser**

Dr. Tim's message to us was that "one person can make a difference." He did and does make a difference for the many teachers, parents and administrators who hear him speak. He electrified the thoughts and feelings of those of us in his audience that day. His words caused us to sit up straighter, laugh louder, smile bigger and even cry more openly. How, then, can he not also impact everyone with whom we interact?

One learns and grows from being exposed to Dr. Tim. His message is not just heard, but internalized. Dr. Tim's unique perspective inspires those who listen to him to incorporate his philosophies into their daily lives.

His words are not just heard, they are felt. Those who listened to him that day, came away feeling that they were a better person for having been exposed to him.

Extraordinary! Thank you Dr. Tim for changing the course of our lives.



**Summer Team Building participants from Randolph Southern Elementary School take time out to pose with their principal, Carolyn Creasy.**

# LEADERSHIP

## BOOKS FOR LEADERS



### **The Frontiers of Management**

by Rosabeth Moss Kanter • Harvard Business School Press • Boston, Massachusetts

This book contains the “new” agenda for managerial work by the most influential management guru of our time. It’s a fresh look at the timeless ideas of Ms. Kanter - in her own words - and a road map for turning them into action. It will spur you on to complete the tasks that are critical to your organization’s success.



### **Magic Trees of the Mind: How to Nurture Your Child's Intelligence, Creativity, and Healthy Emotions from Birth Through Adolescence**

by Marian Diamond, Janet Hopson • E.P. Dutton Publications



### **The Right to Learn: A Blueprint for Creating Schools that Work**

by Linda Darling-Hammond

The author states, “...the education that we more and more require for fulfilling lives and a peaceful and productive society demands that children learn to understand concepts as well as facts, in classrooms where they link and apply ideas, produce their own work and learn to cooperate productively with diverse peers.”



### **Molecules of Emotion**

by Candace B. Pert, Ph.D

Here is a science book that reads like a novel. Learn how information substances link brain, body and immune system through continual communication. Educators who are reading brain research are keenly aware of the vital role of emotions in the learning process. This book strengthens the rationale for ensuring safe, threat-free environments where learning can occur.

## *Two Teachers*

by Robert A. McDaniel, Assistant Superintendent  
Alexandria Community School Corporation

I walked with two teachers just the other day,  
It sure was interesting to hear what they had to say.  
One was complaining about all the paperwork that she had done,  
The other was excited about how well the year had begun.  
One told of a new student who enrolled in her class that day,  
And how he couldn't read on level or his letters he couldn't say.  
The other was so concerned about the child who couldn't count past eight,  
And wondered what she could do next to reach and motivate.  
One belittled the poorly dressed student who was in her room,  
Saying she wouldn't pay attention and fell asleep in the afternoon.  
The other told me of a child whose parents had split apart,  
And how much it had affected her learning from the very start.  
One told me of the little boy who constantly broke the rules,  
And how he was my problem now, since I was principal of the school.

The other asked me for some help with a defiant student, too,  
She wanted to get the parents involved, in hopes that she'd improve.  
One said she didn't have the time for all that in-service stuff,  
She had a masters in education and that was quite enough.  
The other told me of an article in a journal she read last night.  
And what the recent research said about teaching to left brain and right.  
One was angry about the number of dittos she always had to run,  
She considered learning work, there's never time for fun.  
The other invited me to her room to watch the students who  
Were thinking and creating and problem solving, too.  
One was bragging that the whole textbook she had already taught,  
Although it didn't seem to matter if the students learned or not.  
The other told of experiments and of new methods she did try,  
And not just asking who, when and where, but what, if and why.  
I wish I had the answers for the differences between the two,  
For both are so important to the educating we do.  
I guess one feels that teaching is a job and nothing more,  
While the other loves the challenges that always find her door.  
I've known both kinds of teachers and I'm sure that you have too,  
Please stop and think a moment. . . Which one of these are you?



## **SUCCESS** **is Relative**

by Jack Parker, Associate Director, IPLA

**I** have been a long time believer that success is relative, not necessarily to our colleagues or neighbors, but to your own abilities. Last April I had the privilege of listening to Rosabeth Moss Kanter speak at the National Association of Elementary School Principals Annual Convention. She is a Professor of Business Administration at the Harvard Business School and has a unique insight for leading change and innovation.

One comment that stuck with me addressed relative success. Ms. Kanter said that people compare themselves to past performance and other school communities. I am reminded of a story that was told to me long ago which provides insight into this specific topic.

The beginning of the story has two friends backpacking when they stumble across a bear. The backpackers run in the opposite direction of the animal as it begins to take up chase. After a while, one friend stops in his tracks, opens up his backpack and pulls out a pair of running shoes. He begins to replace his heavy hiking shoes with them and his friend exclaims, "What are you doing? We don't have time for this. If we don't get going now, we will never be able to outrun that bear." The backpacker changing his shoes looks up as he is finishing and simply says, "I don't have to out run the bear, I only have to out run you."

Sometimes we need to stop and change shoes, but before we come to that realization we should ask ourselves what serves as motivation. I urge you to invest the time in communicating with your own community and educate them on what your school is doing to improve future adults. Do not just address your parents. Parents have a short-term interest in education. Address the citizens in your community (which includes your parents), for the citizens have a long-term interest in what you are doing.

I would like to close with one final quote from Ms. Kanter: "Truly innovative administrators compare themselves to what they could be." R.M.K. 4/5/98

### **Subscribe to IPLA's List Server!**

To network with principals throughout the state via e-mail, follow the instructions below:

#### **TO SUBSCRIBE**

- 1) Send an e-mail to:  
[autosshare@graymac.doe.state.in.us](mailto:autosshare@graymac.doe.state.in.us)
- 2) In the subject line of the e-mail, type:  
subscribe ipla
- 3) Send the e-mail

#### **TO USE THE LIST SERVER**

Address an e-mail to: [ipla@graymac.doe.state.in.us](mailto:ipla@graymac.doe.state.in.us)

Type out a question or comment in the text portion of the e-mail, fill in the subject line, and send the e-mail.

### **Tips for Communicating with Your Community**

- Put Legislators/Political Office Holders on your mailing lists.
- Extend invitations for school events to citizens that might not have children in your school.
- Use any media available to share programs of growth within your school.
- Find a "volunteer" within your building to serve as a news/media liaison.
- Write an article for publication in your local newspaper.
- Design a brochure containing information about your school that can be included in various mailings or given out at appropriate times.



## We Must Have a Place Where Children Can Have a Whole Group of Adults they Can Trust

By Warner Michener, Principal-Hope Elementary School

**H**ope Elementary School in Hope, Indiana, is committed to this very powerful statement. We do many things to promote a climate of love, respect and family in our school. The only way such an atmosphere can exist in a school is if the leadership will "Walk the Talk." Risk taking must take place. Not in the form of new programs, new materials or new discipline policies, but opening up one's heart to the point of being vulnerable.

What happens at Hope Elementary to create such a special climate? What everyday actions are modeled by the leader?

On any given day it is not unusual to see the principal accept and return a hug from a student. The hug may take place in the hallway, in a classroom or in the dining room. On occasion the hug returned will include a kiss on the top of the student's head. Yes, even the one being sent home with lice will get such a hug. Who needs one more than that child?

The principal tells students individually and collectively, "I Love You." This may seem to you to be somewhat awkward, if you aren't doing it now, try it. At first children may think your job has finally gotten to you, and they will be right. Your job really hasn't gotten to you until you feel you can tell students you love them. Once the shock has worn off, the love will be returned in bushel baskets.

An all school Thanksgiving "dinner" is served in the Hope gymnasium. Approximately five hundred students, teachers, school board members and members of the Ministerial Association eat at one time. The tables are set with table clothes and flowers. Parent volunteers help the food service ladies serve the meals to the guests. Prior to the meal, the principal speaks to the group and shares some thoughts about the many things for which he is thankful. He also mentions priorities.

An all school Christmas sing is held the day before the beginning of Christmas vacation. Many parents and community members attend. At the conclusion of the program, the principal takes a chair to the

center of the gym. Four or five students from each classroom join him and sit on the floor around his chair. Everyone knows these students are representing all the children. The principal has a "father talk with his kids." The importance of love and caring for one another is stressed. The children are reminded of those care givers in their lives. They are reminded of the times someone has held them in the middle of the night when they were sick, the times someone in their lives has sacrificed for them. The children are encouraged to give to those care givers a special present Christmas morning. They are to go to that one special person before opening a single present and simply say, "I Love You" to them. The principal shares that the day will come when that other person is gone from their lives. When that time comes it is much better to say, "I'm glad I did," instead of, "I wish I had." Then the children are told if they have such a person present in the audience, they may go to

them and tell them. The principal walks over to his wife, a third grade teacher at Hope, gives her a kiss in front of everyone and tells her that he loves her.

All convocations are started by giving the sign language for the words, "I Love You." No words are spoken to get the children settled and quiet. The principal simply raises his hand showing the sign language. Within ten seconds all the children are quiet and at least half the group is returning the sign.

As news stories of tragedies in our schools are reported, all of us must ask ourselves if we are doing enough. What can we do to help our students be better citizens and academic achievers? As you read the article presented here you may have thought, it is too big a risk to hug a child and even kiss a child on the head. It is too big a risk to offer a silent prayer. It is too big a risk to tell your students you love them. To many the risk may seem too big. However, isn't the risk even greater if we don't do all of these things and more?

If you lead from the heart, Hope will surely follow.

**"If You Lead  
from the Heart,  
Hope will  
Surely Follow."**

# PROGRAMS

**Compliment Your Curriculum at...**



**The Children's Museum**  
of Indianapolis

**by Jeanette Booth**  
**Director of School Resources**



**T**he Children's Museum of Indianapolis, the largest of its kind in the world, has a long history of enriching the lives of children. Not only is it an ideal destination for families - recently voted the number one children's museum in the nation by the readers of *Family Fun* magazine - but it is also an extremely popular school study trip option. Every year, teachers from throughout the state complement their curriculum by collectively visiting with hundreds of thousands of students.

Student learning at the museum capitalizes upon youngsters' curiosity, engages them in hands-on activities, encourages self-directed learning and facilitates the application of that learning. At The Children's Museum, abstract information becomes concrete, the intangible becomes tangible and the process is transformed into active investigation.

Teachers can bring their classes to the museum for a guided or self-guided tour. For self-guided tours, the museum offers an activity booklet, *On Your Own at The Children's Museum*, which contains information about the museum, its' history and exhibits with activities that can be used at the museum and in the classroom.

Teachers can also select from an array of guided experiences which are conducted by docents who engage in hands-on activities with students letting them investigate specimens and objects, while providing additional information. Teachers can also design a customized learning experience which meets the specific needs of their students by working with museum staff to select the topic, exhibits and the focus of their visit. Pre- and post-visit activities are available and can be used before and after the museum visit.

In addition to the museum's 10 major galleries, the museum has three theaters. The Lilly Theater provides youngsters with educational and entertaining performances. Students can meet James Whitcomb

Riley as he retells some of his favorite poems; or students can be introduced to the Hans Christian Anderson tale, *The Fir Tree*. In the SpaceQuest Planetarium, students learn about astronomy and science-related topics. The CineDome provides large-format films on a variety of educational topics such as the science and history of flight and geography, while making students feel like they are a part of the experience.

Learning opportunities can also be experienced beyond the museum's walls. Through distance learning, students can visit areas of the museum from their school. Students can learn about history through our collections and participate in science experiments and lessons through our ScienceWorks Gallery. The opportunities for distance learning at the museum are endless.

During teacher training programs at the museum, teachers meet with museum staff to better understand all that the museum has to offer in school resources. The Children's Museum website ([www.childrensmuseum.org](http://www.childrensmuseum.org)) enables teachers to learn about school group visits to the museum. It also contains activities for young people which relate to the museum's exhibits and galleries.

Year-round, teachers can borrow educational kits and other resources from the Teacher Resource Link. For a minimal fee, the available kits, books, videos, health models, artifacts, science mounts and specimens can bring hands-on learning into the classroom.

In August, a copy of the School Resources Brochure, describing the 1998-99 school year educational opportunities at the museum, will be mailed to every Indiana school principal. If you do not receive a copy by September, please call (317) 920-2030 or 1 (800) 820-5990 to receive a copy.

The museum looks forward to helping your youngsters "learn to learn" through its numerous and diverse educational experiences.



## The Future of IPLA and the Alumni Association is So Bright... WE HAVE TO WEAR SHADES!

by Robert McDaniel, Assistant Superintendent  
Alexandria Community School Corporation

**R**ecently on June 18 & 19, the IPLA Alumni Association Board of Directors met for their annual Summer Retreat at The Children's Museum of Indianapolis.

The theme of our meeting - "The Future of IPLA and the Alumni Association is So Bright, We Have To Wear Shades!" - focused on the many bright and exciting things happening with the Alumni Association. Over 20 board members and the IPLA staff spent two days discussing a wide variety of ways to improve and expand services to the hundreds of IPLA graduates around the state.

Five major areas of interest to IPLA Alumni were addressed by board members at the retreat.

The Indiana Professional Standards Board approved the new "Standards for Building Level Administrators" on May 20, 1998. Dr. Rebecca Libler, Chair of the Indiana State University Department of Educational Administration, presented valuable information on the standards to the board. Dr. Libler explained the basics of the new standards and the implications for principals. She also facilitated a comparative study by the board of those standards and the proficiencies used by IPLA.

The 1999 IPLA Winter Conference Committee spent many hours last spring and this summer planning an outstanding professional development opportunity for principals. The conference, entitled "Champion Standards for Principals," will focus on all six of the newly adopted professional standards. (The committee has even added a seventh standard - one you won't want to miss!) Please mark your calendars for January 25-26, 1999, at the new Sheraton Hotel (formerly the Radisson Plaza) at Keystone and the Crossing.

The IPLA Alumni Membership Committee has also worked very hard at generating ideas to better "spread the word" on the importance and value of the Alumni Association to IPLA graduates. Expect to see several new and exciting things from this group in your mail soon!

The board has been discussing for some time ways to better meet the needs of IPLA graduates from around the state. At right, note the information regarding NEW "Regional Roundtables" scheduled for October. Legal issues with David Emmert, ISBA General Counsel, will be the focus of this new IPLA Alumni Association service for you.

In January, we will be announcing two more recipients of IPLA Alumni Scholarships for Aspiring Principals. This will increase the number of \$1,000 scholarships to four for 1999! By the year 2002, our group expects to have awarded \$25,000 to deserving individuals who plan to become the next generation of school leaders.

The board enjoyed meeting at The Children's Museum and learning more about the resources available for students, teachers and principals. We were especially impressed with the museum's "Core Values" posted on a wall in our meeting room. These four points speak well of their mission and should be considered by us all.



### IPLA Alumni Association Regional Roundtables

**October 5, 1998 • 9-11 a.m.**  
**Pleasant Grove Elementary School**  
**Greenwood, Indiana**

**October 5, 1998 • 1-3 p.m.**  
**Carmel Administrative Building**  
**Carmel, Indiana**

**October 15, 1998 • 9-11 a.m.**  
**Hazelwood Junior High School**  
**New Albany, Indiana**

**October 16, 1998 • 9-11 a.m.**  
**Concord High School**  
**Elkhart, Indiana**

**For Registration Information,**  
**Contact the IPLA Office at**  
**(317) 232-9004**

**We are About Children • We Nurture a Love of Learning**

**We Constantly Innovate to be Relevant • We Build Our Reputation Through Excellence**

## What's Happening at IPLA

September 9-10, 1998	<b>Academy Sessions</b> Groups 29,30,31,32 Sheraton/Westin, Indianapolis
November 11-12, 1998	<b>Academy Sessions</b> Groups 29,30 Sheraton/Westin, Indianapolis
November 18-19, 1998	<b>Academy Sessions</b> Groups 31,32 Sheraton/Westin, Indianapolis
January 24-26, 1999	<b>IPLA Alumni Association Winter Conference</b> Sheraton/Westin, Indianapolis
June 21-24, 1999	<b>IPLA Summer Team Building Institute</b> Nashville, Indiana

## IPLA Staff

**Deb Lecklider**, Executive Director  
dlecklid@doe.state.in.us

**Jack Parker**, Associate Director  
japarker@doe.state.in.us

**Kelly Hannon**, Program Director  
khannon@doe.state.in.us

**Ruth-Anne Herber**, Administrative  
Assistant  
raherber@doe.state.in.us

**Maranda Cooper**, Secretary  
mcooper@doe.state.in.us

**Pam Parker**, Graphic Designer  
designwsf@aol.com

IPLA's Web Address:  
**[www.doe.state.in.us/ipla](http://www.doe.state.in.us/ipla)**

Indiana Principal Leadership Academy  
Indiana Department of Education  
Room 229, State House  
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204-2798

**SPECIAL EDITION**

